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SUBJECT: GHANA ELECTIONS: NDC SPREADS MORE RUMORS

Classified By: POL CHIEF GARY PERGL FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Embassy was approached by two advisors to National Democratic Congress (NDC) candidate John Atta-Mills, Edward Nunoo and Sylvanos Tamakloe, who told Poloffs that Electoral Commission (EC) Director Kwadwo Afari-Gyan was being pressured by the ruling National Patriotic Party (NPP) to announce false results that would be supplied by the NPP. The EC director told Ambassador that the allegations were "utter nonsense."

¶2. (C) Nunoo, a lawyer who does work for the NDC, and Tamakloe, a security and intelligence advisor to Atta-Mills, said that the reason the results were being announced so slowly was because the EC director's life was being threatened, and that he was looking for safe haven from one of the diplomatic missions. They said that their information was coming from two of the NDC's polling officials representing the party in the EC's "strongroom" where election results are being tabulated. They identified them as Victor Smith, a former Rawlings aide, and Larry Adjetey, another NDC high official. They also said that the NPP was providing false provisional election results to radio and TV stations to give the impression that Akufo-Addo had more votes than the actual case.

¶3. (C) Ambassador managed to put a quick end to these allegations by placing a call to Afari-Gyan, who called the charges "utter nonsense" and said that he felt no threat to his life. He added that he still moves around Accra freely without escorts or bodyguards. He thanked the Ambassador for passing along the information. Polchief later spoke with NDC's Director of Communications, who distanced herself from the allegations, saying that she knew both Nunoo and Tamakloe, but they were not speaking on behalf of Atta-Mills. These would not be the people he would send to you, she said. She confirmed that Victor Smith was a party representative in the EC's strongroom, but inferred that he sometimes spoke without conferring with the candidate and his closest advisors.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: This is one more instance of the NDC playing dirty politics. It has already issued a premature press release claiming victory, which resulted in celebrations in Tamale which police were required to disperse. It held jubilation ceremonies at party headquarters in Accra that had to be contained by police, and later claimed that the celebrations were being held only for some of their parliamentary winners. And it has been accusing the NPP of malfeasance in at least three parliamentary elections without providing concrete evidence. Its behavior is not helping its cause, and seems ill considered in the face of the good showing it has been making in the elections. We suspect these two men were free-lancing. So far, these efforts have not grown beyond the level of irritation, but we will monitor the situation carefully.

TEITELBAUM